Organational change and Employee Attitude

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Abstract: This study focuses on employee workplace and demographic predictors to know the employee attitudes and behaviors regarding organizational change. The findings indicate significant relationships between readiness for change and workplace and demographic factors. The economic and social environment is so dynamic that without adapting to such change even the most successful organization cannot survive in the changed environment. Any business in today's fast-moving environment that is looking for the pace of change to slow is likely to be sorely disappointed. In fact, businesses should embrace change. Change is important for any organization because, without change, businesses would likely lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the needs of what most hope to be a growing base of loyal customers. It is difficult for organizations to avoid change, as new ideas promote growth for them and their members. Change occurs for many reasons such as new staff roles; increases or decreases in funding; acquisition of new technology; new missions, vision or goals; and to reach new members or clients. Changes can create new opportunities, but are often met with criticism from resistant individuals within the group.

**Keywords:** Organizational change, Employees attitude, Job satisfaction, Job security and Commitment.

Introduction: People routinely form evaluations of the things they encounter in their social worlds. Some people favor legalized abortion; others oppose it. Some people support smokers' rights; others think that smoking should be banned in all public places. Some of us like vanilla ice cream; others prefer chocolate. These evaluations are called attitudes. Attitudes can be directed toward any entity—people, objects, and ideas. Attitudes can be positive, negative, mixed (i.e., ambivalent), or neutral, and they can vary in their intensity. Attitudes have important consequences for social thought and behavior, so it is not surprising that social psychologists have made the study of attitudes central to their field.

This paper will briefly review the study of attitudes— what they are, where they come from, how they relate to behavior, and how they change. The literature on attitudes and attitude change has been accumulating for nearly 100 years and, as a result, is quite extensive. It is impossible to summarize and evaluate all that is known about this topic in a brief paper.
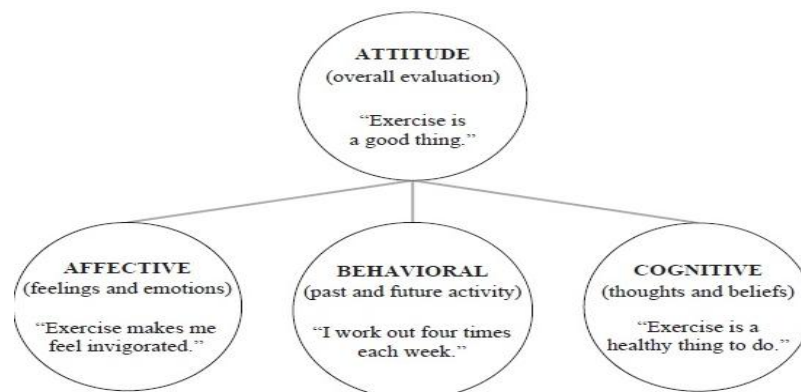
Visual representation of the tripartite model.

Figure: Attitude

The Nature and Origin of Attitudes: Attitudes are evaluations of people, objects, and ideas. The tripartite theory holds that attitudes are made up of three distinct components: affective, cognitive, and behavioral, which combine to form your overall evaluation of the "attitude object" (e.g., chocolate). The affective component consists of your emotions or feelings toward the attitude object (e.g., Eating chocolate makes me happy.). The cognitive component consists of your thoughts or beliefs about the attitude object (e.g., Eating chocolate has health benefits.). The behavioral component consists of your actions or behavior toward the attitude object (e.g., I eat chocolate every day.). Every attitude has these three components, but social psychologists have discovered that some attitudes are based more on one type of information than others are. Some attitudes are based primarily on affect, whereas others are based more on people's thoughts about the attitude object.

Where do attitudes come from—how are they formed? Attitudes are formed through affective, cognitive, and behavioral processes. These processes can also be involved in attitude change. In other words, attitudes can change in the same way that they are formed.

To some extent, people's attitudes are based on their emotions or feelings. There are many ways that affect can become associated with the attitude object. One process is classical conditioning, which occurs when a neutral stimulus comes to elicit a reflexive response when it is paired repeatedly with a stimulus that already produces that response. For example, suppose that a girl experiences positive feelings when she is in the arms of her boyfriend. Suppose also that the girl's boyfriend always wears a particular brand of cologne. After a while, the smell of the cologne by itself will elicit positive feelings in the girl. Attitude formation and change can also happen when people learn a more general association between two stimuli. Advertisers frequently pair their products with things people already like (e.g., celebrities, attractive models, and puppies), hoping that consumers will form positive attitudes toward their products through the principle of association.

Does it pay off? You bet! In one study, men saw one of two advertisements for a new car, one with a sexy female model and the other without. Men who saw the advertisement with the model rated the car as more appealing than did those who saw the ad without the model. When asked about it, the men claimed that the sexy model had nothing to do with their judgments (Smith & Engle, 1968).

Another affective process is operant conditioning. In this type of conditioning, behavior becomes more likely to occur or less so, depending on its consequences. Reinforcement strengthens behavior, whereas punishment weakens it. Imagine that a young boy repeats a racial slur that he heard on television and receives an approving nod from his father. The father's approval serves as reinforcement for the boy's behavior, and will likely engender racist attitudes in the boy.

Another way that affect is involved in the formation of attitudes is mere exposure. The mere exposure effect occurs when repeated exposure to an object leads to increased liking of that object. Simply put, the more often people are exposed to something, the more they tend to like it. For example, Robert Zajonc (1968) exposed participants to nonsense words such as "biwejni" and "saricik" at varying frequencies. He found that the more often participants were exposed to these words, the more they came to like them. Zajonc also found the mere exposure effect with college yearbook photographs. Hundreds of other studies have confirmed that the mere exposure effect is a robust phenomenon (e.g., Bornstein, 1989). In fact, people do not even need to be aware of exposure in order for this effect to occur. In studies of subliminal

exposure (e.g., Bornstein & D'Agostino, 1992), stimuli are flashed on a screen so quickly that participants are not aware of them. The frequency of exposure varies by stimulus. Participants are later shown pictures of the stimuli and are asked how much they like them and whether they recognize them. Even though participants do not recognize the stimuli, they prefer the ones they were exposed to the most. Research also shows that attitudes can be formed through cognitive processes. People often form an attitude toward some attitude object (e.g., a new restaurant) after gaining information about it. This information can come from direct experience with the attitude object (e.g., eating at a new restaurant) or from indirect experience (e.g., reading a review of the restaurant). If the experience leads to favorable thoughts, people will form a positive attitude. If the experience leads to unfavorable thoughts, people will develop a negative attitude. Not surprisingly, attitudes based on direct experience tend to be stronger than attitudes derived from indirect experience (e.g., Fazio & Zanna, 1978).

A third source of attitudes is behavioral information. Although it may seem odd, past behavior can shape our attitudes. According to Daryl Bem's (1972) self-perception theory, people come to know their attitudes by inferring them from observations of their own behavior. Suppose that someone asks you if you like lettuce. At first, you are not sure how to answer. You have never really considered it before. As you think about it, you realize that you must like lettuce because you often eat salads. This self-perception process only works when people are uncertain about their attitudes. People who hate lettuce (or whatever the attitude object is) do not have to observe their behavior to figure out how they feel about it. The idea that behavior can shape attitudes is covered more thoroughly later in this research-paper.

Organizational Change: Organization change takes place when a company makes an evolution from its current state to some desired expectations. Managing organizational change is the process of forecasting and implementing change in organization in such a way as to reduce employee resistance and cost to the organization while at the same time maximizing the effectiveness of the change effort.From an inactive perception, organizational change occurs as a reaction to an ever-changing environment or as a response to a current emergency situation. Change is an approach of shifting/transitioning individual's teams. It is an organization process intended at helping stakeholders to accept and hold change in their business environment in their delicate lives.

Organizational changes mainly focus on two factors namely:

- Organizational factors/External factors
- Individual factors/Internal factors

Employee Attitude Towards Change: Thurstone, (1931) defined attitude as an influencer for or against an emotional leaning. All port, (1935) detailed attitude as a mind and neural condition of willingness, planned through knowledge, exert an instruction or lively pressure upon the individual's response to all substance and situations which it is related.Attitude is a word related to psychology, and attitude differs from person to person perception. The main focus of research on attitude concerns the nature, function of attitude and how employees mould themselves towards change. The employee attitudes can influence character to formulate the response to change.Employee attitude focused on individual attitude towards change in the organization. The attitude brings positive or negative type of activities of employees during the change process. There are two types of employee's attitude towards change. One aspect of employees may have a negative attitude towards organizational change and are more likely to re- fuse to accept the change. And the other aspect of employees have a positive attitude towards organizational change are more likely to hold up to the change.Koslowsky and Zeev (1990) commented that employees who are

reliable towards the organization have a positive attitude regarding change. In other hand, employees who are not committed to the organization; has a negative attitude to- wards the change. According to Erich J.Schwarz, (2009), employees who have positive attitude towards change in the organization become valuable employees to the organization. Apfelthaler, (2008) revealed employees recognized change with valuable train- ing, which helped in the development of the employees with effective skill. Baumgartner, K (2008), described that most of the employees are not prepared for change. Employee's negative attitude towards change is due to the fear about job. They avoid change because they may be unable to cope up with change and may loose their job when organization is downsized or reshuffled with change.Meyer (2002) stated that employees who are highly pleased with the organization have no reason for reporting negative attitude without any threat in common. Contented employees themselves show greater attention in organizational change behavior in ascertaining the goals and providing precise outcome. To effectively cope with permanent change in their business organization should commonly focus on planned change. To overcome resistance to change, organization should prepare a clear arrangement and change awareness among employees in order to generate well planned work surroundings and in proportion work agenda to reduce pres- sure and insecurity.

Factors Affecting Employee Attitude towards Change:

Job satisfaction: Locke, E.A. (1969) defined job satisfaction is the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating one's job values and it is conceptualized as a general attitude toward an employee. Job sat- isfaction is highly important because it is significant to the physical and mental well-being of employees, i.e. job satisfaction has relevance with human health and it is essential to understand the factors involved in job satisfaction to improve the well being of employees. Work is an important feature of employee lives and most employees spend a large part of their lives at work. Schwepker (2001), Smith, P.C., Kend- all, L.M. and Hulin, C.L, (1969). Tait, M., Padgett, M.Y. and Baldwin, T.T. (1989) argued that job satisfaction is linked with job performance, workplace turnover and life satisfaction. Job dissatisfaction predicts withdrawal behaviors like turno- ver and absenteeism which measures the financial impact of employee on organizations. Hence measuring facet of job satisfaction can attain a complete picture of their specific strengths and weaknesses related to organization. Cascio, (1986); Mirvis & Lawler, (1977)

Job security: Myths and Reality (1994) proposed an interesting starting point to define job security as the relative assurance, owned by an employee, that he/she is shielded against damages that would result from the loss of his/her work. Morris et al., (1993) stated job security as one of the most important obstacle for change and it is directly related with the organizational commitment. Compensation and benefits' is another occupational stressor associated with negative attitude to change. Employees need to undergo sufficient training and should be educated particularly during change because job security reduces fear and uncertainty that act as resistance to change.

Conclusion: One of the most baffling and recalcitrant of the problems which business executives face is employee resistance to change. Resistance is usually created because of certain blind spots and employee attitudes with the technical aspects of new ideas. Management can take concrete steps to deal constructively with these employee attitudes. The steps include emphasizing new standards of performance and encouraging them to think in different ways, as well as making use of the fact that signs of resistance can serve as a practical warning signal in directing and timing technological changes.An organization must develop a new vision and a new faith in the workforce before it can approach the

organizational change process. Managers must exhibit a trust in the work- ers to contribute to solving organizational problems, which in turn will build trust in management. The door must always be open for individuals to take an active role in improving the organization, allowing for open communication, initiative, and teamwork in problem solving.

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